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National Foreign Assessment Center

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Foreign Dissident Groups

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(b)(3)

GUATEMALA

Guatemalan Communist Party
(Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo) (PGT)

AKA:
Guatemalan Labor Party

Definition and Ideology:
Orthodox, Moscow-line party that opposes terrorist activities. In October 1978 expelled pro-Cuban members of its military commission who favored use of violence to topple Guatemalan Government (see Provisional Directorate of the Guatemalan Communist Party).

Since 1978 split, has been trying to restructure its organization and to rebuild military commission to meet what it views as increasing likelihood of armed struggle in Guatemala. Membership concentrated in Guatemala City, Quezaltenango and southern coastal area.

Goals and Activities:
To establish a socialist form of government in Guatemala.

Established:
1949

Membership:
In 1978 had 200-250 active members and about 1,000 sympathizers.

Sources of Support:
USSR and Cuba officially recognize and support PGT.

Publications:

Leaders:
López Aguilar, Santiago
Orantes Trocoli, Carlos
Rosales Román, Ricardo

Guatemalan Labor Party
See Guatemalan Communist Party

Guerrilla Army of the Poor
(Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres) (EGP)

AKA:

Definition and Ideology:
Most effective and active terrorist group in Guatemala. Is a pro-Castro, Marxist-Leninist splinter group of Rebel Armed Forces (FAR). Members include university students, professional women, Indian peasants.

Has proclaimed "a war to the death on US imperialism and its local representatives." In 1977 operated in four main areas: southern and northern coastal areas, eastern Guatemala, and Guatemala City.

Guerrilla Army of the Poor (Cont.)

Goals and Activities:
To destroy the Guatemalan Army and what it views as other repressive bodies of the ruling classes and to seize political, military and economic power.

Engages in armed confrontation with Army and in kidnaping, assassination, bombing and raids in rural areas and in Guatemala City. Publishes news bulletins, appealing for support in fight against the Guatemalan Government. Has announced a coalition with PGT Dissident Faction and FAR.

Established:
Split from FAR in 1971; adopted present name in 1975.

Membership:
About 1,000

Sources of Support:
Some members trained in Cuba, and Cuba has sent advisers to Guatemala. Has obtained weapons through theft and clandestine purchase.

Publications:

Leaders:
Macías Mayorga, Julio César (Montes, César)
Ramírez de León, Ricardo

(b)(3)

Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA)
(Organización del Pueblo en Armas)

AKA:

Definition and Ideology:
Politicomilitary, leftist revolutionary group. Considers armed struggle a necessity.

Goals and Activities:
To unite the people in fight against Guatemalan Government; to manage revolutionary struggle in a conscientious, progressive and responsible manner; and to free people from poverty, repression and exploitation.

Established:
First openly identified September 1979, but probably was organized earlier.

Membership:
400-500

Sources of Support:
Probably allied with Rebel Armed Forces, Guerrilla Army of the Poor, and PGT Dissident Faction.

Publications:
Issues monthly bulletins.

Leaders:

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Approved for Release: 2020/01/21 C06626218

(b)(3)

GUATEMALA (Cont.)

PGT Dissident Faction

See Provisional Directorate of the Guatemalan Communist Party

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Provisional Directorate of the Guatemalan Communist Party

(Provisional Directorate of the PGT)

AKA:

PGT Dissident Faction

Definition and Ideology:

Pro-Cuban, Marxist-Leninist dissident PGT faction. Composed primarily of members of PGT and Rebel Armed Forces (FAR) who constituted PGT military commission and were expelled by orthodox PGT in October 1978 for terrorist activities. More militant than orthodox PGT; favors use of violence to topple Guatemalan Government.

Operates in Guatemala City and in southern and southwestern areas of country.

Goals and Activities:

To take control of orthodox PGT and to overthrow Government of Guatemala.

Terrorist activities have included assassinations of wealthy landowners, businessmen, Army and police personnel, and members of National Liberation Movement, Guatemala's most conservative political party. Has cooperated with FAR and maintains contact with Guerrilla Army of the Poor.

Established:

Expelled from PGT in 1978; organizational structure established by March 1979.

Membership:

Sources of Support:

Has direct ties to Cubans in Cuba and in Mexico. Cuba is its primary foreign contact, although Cuba and USSR still officially recognize and support orthodox PGT.

Publications:

Leaders:

Cardoza Aguilar, José Alberto
Chavac, Eugenio
Contreras Pérez, Manuel
Ramírez Corado, Francisco
Villaseñor, Max Armando

(b)(3)

Rebel Armed Forces

(Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes) (FAR)

AKA:

Rebel Armed Forces (Cont.)

Definition and Ideology:

Cuban-oriented, faction-ridden guerrilla/terrorist organization. Splinter group of Guatemalan Communist Party. Violently anti-United States, with a history of terrorism against US officials. Has regional commands in Guatemala City and in northern and eastern Guatemala.

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Goals and Activities:

To unite with Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP) and PGT Dissident Faction to overthrow current regime and establish a leftist government. Has kidnaped and assassinated Guatemalan and foreign officials; assassinated US Ambassador Gordon Mein in 1968. Was inactive from mid-1975 through 1978.

Established:

Split from PGT January 1968.

Membership:

About 100 members and a few hundred sympathizers.

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Publications:

Leaders:

Díaz, Ramiro
Soto García, Jorge Ismael (Manzana)

(b)(3)

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